

CHARACTERISTICKS
OF A
BELIEVING CHRISTIAN
IN
PARADOXES,
AND SEEMING
CONTRADICTIONS.

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With a PREFACE by a CLERGYMAN.

The SECOND EDITION.

L O N D O N :
PRINTED IN THE YEAR, MDCCLVIII.
(Price One Penny.)

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IN order to prevent a Misconstruction of the following Paradoxes, it may be needful to inform the Reader, that when rightly considered, they are no ways ludicrous, sarcastical or prophane, but solid, comfortable and Godly Truths, taught by the Holy Ghost in the School of Experience, and well understood by them who are truly Christians.

I do not say, that every Babe in Christ can understand them all, but this I think I may venture to affirm, he that understands none of them, hath not yet learned his *ABC* in the School of Christ.

But if any should ask me, why I choose to publish his Lordship's Paradoxes rather than any other? I answer, 1st. Because, though very comprehensive, yet they are but short, and may therefore be easily purchased by the poorer Sort of Christians. 2^{dly}. That the minute Philosophers and ignoble Gentlemen of our Day might hence be taught, that a fine Gentleman, a sound Scholar, and a great Philosopher may be a Christian; since we find not only Paul, a Justin Martyr, &c. but even in our own Nation, so great a Philosopher as my Lord Bacon, espousing, and confessing the Christian Verity.

In a Word, Reader, if thou understandest these few Paradoxes, bless God for them; if thou understandest them not, thou mayest, like the Eunuch, call in some Philip to thy Assistance: but above all permit me to advise thee to ask of the Father of Lights, who giveth Wisdom liberally and upbraideth not.

I am, for Christ's Sake,

Thy Friend and Servant,

J. GREEN.



CHARACTERISTICS

OF A

Believing CHRISTIAN, &c.

I. **A** Christian is one who believes such Things as his Reason cannot comprehend; hopes for Things he never saw; and labours for what he knows he shall not obtain: yet in the Issue, his Belief appears not to be false; his Hope makes him not ashamed; his Labour is not in vain.

II. He believes Three to be One, and One to be Three; a Father not to be older than his Son, a Son to be equal with his Father, and one proceeding from both, to be equal with both: as believing Three Persons in one Nature, and two Natures in one Person.

III. He believes a Virgin to be the Mother of a Son, and that very Son of hers to be her Maker. He believes him to have been shut up in a narrow Cell, whom Heaven and Earth could not contain. He believes him to have been born in Time, who was, and is, from Everlasting. He believes him to have been a weak Child, and carried in Arms, who is the Almighty: and him once to have died, who alone has Life and Immortality in himself.

IV. He believes the God of all Grace to have been angry with one that never offended him: and God who hates Sin, to be reconciled to himself, though a Sinner continually: and never making,

ing, or being able to make him Satisfaction. He believes a most just God to have punished a most just Person, and to have justified himself, though a most ungodly Sinner. He believes himself freely pardoned ; and yet a sufficient Satisfaction was made for him.

V. He believes himself to be precious in God's Sight ; and yet loaths himself in his own. He dares not justify himself, even in those Things wherein he can find no Fault with himself : and yet believes God accepts him in those Services, wherein himself is able to find many Faults.

VI. He praises God for his Justice ; yet fears him for his Mercy. He is so ashamed, that he dares not open his Mouth before God ; and yet he comes with Boldness to God, and asks him any thing he needs. He is so humble as to acknowledge himself to deserve nothing but Evil ; yet he believes that God means him all Good. He fears always ; yet is bold as a Lion. He is often sorrowful ; yet always rejoicing. Many times complaining ; yet always giving of Thanks. He is the most lowly minded ; yet the greatest Aspirer, Most contented ; yet ever craving.

VII. He bears a lofty Spirit in a mean Condition. When he is ablest, he thinks meanest of himself. He is rich in Poverty ; and poor in the Midst of Riches. He believes all the World to be his ; yet takes nothing without special Leave from God. He covenants with God for nothing ; yet looks for a great Reward. He loses his Life, and gains by it ; and whilst he loses it, he saves it.

VIII. He lives not to himself ; yet of all others he is most wise for himself. He denies himself often ; yet no Man loves himself better. He is most reproached ; yet most honoured. He has most Afflictions, and most Comforts.

IX. The more Injuries his Enemies do him, the more Advantages he gains by them : the more he forfakes worldly Things, the more he enjoys them.

X. He is the most temperate of all Men ; yet fares most deliciously. He lends and gives most freely ; yet he is the greatest Usurer. He is meek towards all Men ; yet inexorable by men. He is the best Child, Husband, Brother, Friend ; yet hates Father and Mother, Brother and Sister.

XI. He desires to have more Grace than any Man in the World ; yet is truly sorrowful when he sees any Man have less than himself. He knows no Man after the Flesh, yet he gives all Men their due Respects. He knows if he please Man, he cannot be the Servant of Christ ; yet for Christ's Sake he pleases all Men in all Things. He is a Peace-maker ; yet is a continual Fighter, and an irreconcilable Enemy.

XII. He believes him to be worse than an Infidel, that provides not for his Family ; yet himself lives and dies without Care. He reverences all his Superiors ; yet stands stiffly upon Authority. He is severe to his Children, because he loves them ; and by being favourable to his Enemies, he revenges himself upon them.

XIII. He believes the Angels to be more excellent Creatures than himself ; yet counts them his Servants. He believes that he receives many good Things by their Means, and yet he never prays them for Assistance, nor offers them Thanks, which he does not disdain to the meanest Christian.

XIV. He believes himself a King, how mean soever he be : and yet how great soever he is, he thinks himself not too good to serve the meanest Saint.

XV.

XV. He is often in Prison, yet always at Liberty : a Freeman, tho' a Servant. He loves not Honour amongst Men ; yet highly prizes a good Name.

XVI. He believes that God hath bid every Man who does him good to do it ; yet of any Man he is the most thankful to those that do for him. He would lay down his Life to save the Soul of his Enemy ; yet will he not venture upon one Sin to save the Life of him, who saved his.

XVII. He believes Christ to have no need of any Thing he does ; yet reckons he relieves Christ in all his Acts of Charity. He knows he can do nothing of himself ; yet he labours to work out his own Salvation. He professes he can do nothing ; yet as truly professes he can do all things. He knows that Flesh and Blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God ; yet believes he shall go to Heaven both Body and Soul.

XVIII. He trembles at God's Word ; yet counts it sweeter to him than Honey, and the Honey-Comb, and dearer than thousands of Gold and Silver.

XIX. He believes that God will never damn him, and yet fears God for being able to cast him into Hell. He knows he shall not be saved by or for his good Works ; yet does all the good Works he can.

XX. He knows God's Providence is in all Things ; yet is so diligent in his Calling and Business, as if he were to work out his own Happiness. He believes that God before-hand has purposed what he shall be, and that nothing can make him alter his Purpose ; yet prays and endeavours as if he would *force* God to save him for ever.

XXI. He prays and labours for what he is confident God means to give, and the more assured he is,

is, the more earnest he prays. He prays for what he knows he shall never obtain, and yet gives not over. He prays and labours for what he knows he shall be no less happy without. He prays with all his Heart not to be led into Temptation ; yet rejoices when he is fallen into it. He believes his Prayers are heard, even when they are denied, and gives Thanks for that which he prays against.

XXII. He hath within him both Flesh and Spirit, and yet is not a double-minded Man. He is often led captive by the Law of sin ; yet it never gets Dominion over him. He cannot Sin ; yet he can do nothing without Sin. He does nothing against his Will ; yet maintains he doth what he would not. He wavers and doubts ; yet still obtains.

XXIII. He is often tossed and shaken ; yet is as Mount-Sion. He is a Serpent and a Dove ; a Lamb and a Lion ; a Reed and a Cedar. He is sometimes so troubled, that he thinks nothing true in Religion ; yet if he did think so, he could not be troubled at all. He sometimes thinks that God has no Mercy for him ; yet resolves to die in the Pursuit of it. He believes, like *Abraham*, against Hope, and tho' he cannot answer God's Logic, yet with the Woman of *Canaan* he hopes to prevail with the Rhetoric of Importunity.

XXIV. He wrestles, and yet prevails ; and tho' yielding himself unworthy of the least Blessing he enjoys ; yet *Jacob* like, he will not let go without a new Blessing. He sometimes thinks himself to have no Grace at all, and yet how poor and afflicted soever he is besides, he would not change Conditions with the most prosperous Man under Heaven, that is a manifest Wordling.

XXV. He sometimes thinks that the Ordinances of God do him no good ; yet he would rather part with his Life than be deprived of them.

XXVI. He was born dead ; yet so that it would have been Murther for any one to have taken his Life away : and after he began to live, he was ever dying.

XXVII. And tho' he has an eternal Life begun in him, yet he accounts that he has a Death to pass through.

XXVIII. He counts Self-murder a heinous Sin, yet is ever busied in crucifying the Flesh, and in putting to Death his earthly Members, not doubting but that there will come a Time of Glory, when he shall be esteemed precious in the Sight of the great God of Heaven and Earth, appearing with Boldness at his Throne, and asking any Thing he needs: being endued with Humility, by acknowledging his great Crimes and Offences, and owning that he deserves nothing but severe Punishment.

XXIX. He lives invisible to those that see him, and those that know him best do but guess at him ; yet those many times judge more truly of him than he does of himself.

XXX. The World will sometimes count him a Saint, when God accounts him a Hypocrite : and afterwards, when the World brands him for a Hypocrite, God owns him for a Saint.

XXXI. His Death makes not an End of him : his Soul which was put into his Body, is not to be perfected without his Body ; yet his Soul is more happy, when it is separated from his Body, than when it was joined to it : and his Body, tho' torn in Pieces, burnt to Ashes, ground to Powder, or trod to Rottenness, shall be no Loser.

XXXII. His Advocate, his Surety shall be his Judge ; his mortal Part shall become immortal : and what was sown in Corruption and Defilement, shall be raised in Incorruption and Glory : and a finite Creature shall possess an infinite Happiness.

